

VZCZCXYZ0020
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHSJ #0958 3442048
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 092048Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0338
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SAN JOSE 000958

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA, WHA/CEN, WHA/EPSC AND EEB; PANAMA PLEASE PASS
TO SECRETARY'S PARTY AND BNARANJO AND JREIFMAN; DEPT PLEASE
PASS TO USTR AMALITO AND DOLIVER

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [CS](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [OVIP](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: COSTA RICA CONFIRMS DELEGATION FOR PATHWAYS TO
PROSPERITY; MINISTER ARIAS TO JOIN DELEGATION

REF: A. STATE 125622
[1](#)B. SAN JOSE 823

[1](#)1. (U) The Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Foreign
Trade for the GOCR confirmed the following attendees for the
Pathways to Prosperity meeting in Panama on December 10 (Ref
A):

- Minister of the Presidency Rodrigo Arias
- Minister of Foreign Affairs Bruno Stagno
- Minister of Foreign (COMEX) Trade Marco Vinicio Ruiz
- Director-General for Foreign Trade Gabriela Castro
- the GOCR's Ambassador to Panama

[1](#)2. (U) Minister Arias is a last-minute addition. On
December 9, President Oscar Arias asked the Minister (who is
also his brother) to join Ministers Stagno and Ruiz at the
Pathways meeting. Minister Ruiz is traveling to Panama on
December 9. Ministers Stagno and Arias will arrive together
the morning of December 10. The Ministries of Foreign
Affairs and Foreign Trade, and the GOCR Embassy in Washington
all confirmed Minister Arias, plans to attend Pathways.

[1](#)3. (SBU) The responsibilities of Minister Arias are similar
to a prime minister. We believe that he will request
"special understanding" for Costa Rica as it finalizes work
with USTR on the CAFTA entry into force details for January
[1](#)1. Such a request would emulate what President Arias did
with Commerce Secretary Gutierrez in late September (Ref B).
As USTR, COMEX and we are well aware, a delay to come to a
"special understanding" could jeopardize the already very
tight schedule for CAFTA to enter into force for Costa Rica
on January 1.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Foreign Minister Stagno accepted Secretary Rice's
invitation for a pull aside. We anticipate that Minister
Arias will want to join the pull aside with S and will want
to meet with DUSTR John Veroneau as well, since CAFTA is his
primary agenda item.

[1](#)5. (SBU) We have urged the GOCR to lead the working group on
the environment (a component of Pillar Four). The GOCR
responded with interest but did not formally confirm to lead
the working group.
BRENNAN